

JANNETT THOMAS
COLEMAN

Jannett Thomas Coleman was born November 11, 1874, at the home of her grandmother, Jannett Campbell Watson, the fifth child of Margret Watson and Joseph Thomas. While still a tiny babe, her family moved into their newly built two-room home in Center Creek Canyon. Later, as the family grew, four more rooms were added, and it was a lovely, well-kept home.

Her parents were industrious. In the morning they arose early. The morning chores were done before breakfast. Then the girls' hair was braided tightly, their sun bonnets sewed to the hair, and they were sent out to play. The kitchen floor was plain boards and was scrubbed once a week with sand. On scrubbing day, the children played outside until the floor was dry. In the winter they sat on chairs lined up against the wall, and they never got off until the floor was dry.

In the summer they played house in the oak brush and waded in the creek. How they loved to dig for sego roots! With a sharp stick they would push deep down around the roots of the plants, then pry up on the stick with all their might in order to get the tasty roots. This was the reason all their dresses were worn out in the tummy area first. They also loved to eat the wild berries and currants that grew in the canyon. They often went visiting to their grandmothers and their cousins, walking the four or five miles, often staying overnight. 3/6

HEBER BIOGRAPHIES

During the winter, Nettie and the other girls were taught to knit, crochet and sew carpet rags. A small bench was placed behind the kitchen range, and it was here the busy mother could teach them, rock the cradle, and cook the meals. Each girl was taught to knit one, purl two, and turn a heel. Before she went to school she was knitting her own stockings. She learned to knit so well she could knit as she walked.

Other lessons were learned also. One morning her mother called, "Nettie, bring a stick of wood." Nettie did as she was told. One stick of wood. Her mother saw no humor in the act, so Nettie spent the day carrying wood. Another time, in a hurry to go play, she gave the dishes a very quick job, but when her mother inspected the dishes, Nettie was called back to wash every one in the tall cupboard.

When she was six years old, she walked the two miles to the Center Creek school, but with the coming of cold weather her feet were frozen and her schooling ended. The next year her father took her to Heber to a school run by William Buys. He paid her tuition and arranged for her to stay with her Grandmother Watson.

In the winter of 1886, the last week of February, she was awakened by her mother and told to run quick for help, as her father was very sick. She quickly dressed and ran out into the night, slipping and falling into the deep snow again and again as she rushed the three-quarter-mile up the canyon to the neighbor's. Her father was indeed very sick and died within the week of pneumonia. He was 38 years old at the time of his death and was considered a prosperous man. He was the father of eleven children, nine of whom were living. The oldest was 18 years old and the youngest was five months old. Two weeks following, the mother of this family, worn by nursing and working, and heartbroken, took sick and died of pneumonia also. Thus the children were left orphans.

After the death of their parents, some of the children went to live with relatives. Others stayed on the farm. Nettie spent three years with her grandparents. To earn money, she washed on the board, ironed, cleaned house, ran errands, churned, and picked currants. The wages were small, often only 10 cents for a day's work. When

George Edward Coleman
Janett Campbell Thomas

317

she was 14 years old she went back to keep house for her younger brothers. She cared for them until her marriage, three years later.

Early in May, 1891, she married George E. Coleman, of Tooele, Utah. For some time they resided in Tooele, but Nettie missed her brothers and sisters, so they moved to Heber, and here she spent the remaining years of her life. To this couple were born 10 children: Howard, Florence, Ethel, George, Joe, Nellie, Ralph, Agnes, Farrell, and Faye. There was much sickness and sadness to try Nettie's strength. Farrell, just a baby, was drowned in the small irrigation ditch. Ralph died of heart trouble when he was 12 years old. Agnes lived to maturity and married, but Nettie saw her die of heart trouble also. The oldest son, Howard, enlisted in the navy in World War I and spent most of his time overseas during the war. Her husband died January 10, 1923, following a five-year illness. Through all this sickness, Nettie worked, doing what she could in her home to earn money for the necessities of life. She managed to raise her children and keep out of debt. Her home was a gathering place for neighbors and friends. She often had sick friends or relatives come to her and nursed them to health. She loved to crochet, knit, and embroider. No matter how busy she was, she found some time each day to read something. Her life was hard, but her sense of humor and love for her brothers and sisters, as well as her own family and friends, kept her busy and happy for 85 years.